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# THE LINNET and GOLDFINCH. A FABLE.

ADDRESSED TO

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BY HENRY MANNERS

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# T A B L E

OF

LINNET AND GOLDFINCH

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## A FABLE.

THAT Man is made by Nature free,
The Tyrant grants, and Slaves agree;
Yet few aſſert the mighty Claim,
Man, born in Glory, lives in Shame;
For moſt, like *Iſaac*'s haſty Boy,
Exchange their Bleſſing for a Toy,

To

To fancy'd Wants their Birth-right give;
And living, loſe the Cauſe to live.

The Light of Reaſon ſcarce we claim,
When *Cuſtom* clouds the infant Beam;
Man's Tutor is the gen'ral Voice,
And leaves no Room to Reaſon's Choice;
For each Opinion we embrace,
Is Accident of Time and Place.

Next *Paſſion* rules with ſcepter'd Sway,
And each by turns commands its Day;
Like *Phaeton*, they drive the Team,
And waſte the World of Man in Flame:
*Hope*'s gay Elizium here diſplays
Viſions of Joy, and Shades of Eaſe;
There *Grief* caſts down her tear-worn Eyes,
Strikes her ſad Breaſt, and ſwells with Sighs;
Here *Fame* with gen'rous Ardour fills,
There *Pleaſure*, as ſhe kiſſes, kills:

Here

Here burns *Revenge*, there *Anger* glows,
Here *Pity* weeps for other's Woes,
And *Love*, that wins o'er every Breaſt,
Appears in Liveries of the Reſt.
Thus his own Tyrant Man firſt reigns,
And fits himſelf for foreign Chains.

Is there a Clime, where ſocial Life
Feels not the Wounds of public Strife?
The firſt Attack by Sap's begun,
A Breach once made, our Rights are won;
Then Men awake, they ope their Eyes,
And know the Angel, as ſhe flies;
For Freedom, as for Friends, we moan;
'Till loſt, their Worth is rarely known.

*Order* and *Peace*, harmonious Train,
Attend *Subordination*'s Chain,
Quiet and Strength we trace from this,
And form the Scale of Common Bliſs;

Yet Links, which Place and Honours crown,
Cruſh their inferior Brethren down;
For Power, like ſome unfriendly Shade,
Kills the weak Plant, that courts its Aid.

Amidst theſe Ills, weak groveling Man
Boaſts himſelf Lord of Nature's Plan,
He boaſts of Reaſon's heav'nly Light,
He boaſts——and gives up Reaſon's Right.
The Spend-thrift vaunts in idle Prate
The Rent-roll of his loſt Eſtate,
With abject Pride in Bondage ſwells,
And plays his Chains, as Beaſts their Bells.

But theſe are Morals long ſince ſtale,
And ſerve——to introduce a Tale.

A Goldfinch, taken in the Snare,
Relenting Fate made *Chloe*'s Care;
His ſtreaky Plumes, his native Lays,
Engag'd her Love, and Love her Praiſe.
Around him Blooms of various Hues
Laviſh'd the Fragrance of their Dues;
The chryſtal Stream's tranſparent Face
Receiv'd new Brightneſs from his Vaſe;
What Pomp could give, his *Chloe* gave;
Thus oft a Palace holds a Slave.

But now the ſickly Summer burns,
The River-Gods forſake their Urns;
The languid Flowrets loſe their Paint,
And Parent Nature ſeems to faint.
Then *Chloe* ſought the panting Breeze,
Where mix the Boughs of crowding Trees,
Where the fork'd Beam in vain aſſails,
And Freſhneſs breathes in lively Gales;

Hither

Hither the Nymph her Charge convey'd,
To taſte the cool refreſhing Shade;
Extatic Pleaſure ſwells his Veins,
He pours to Heaven his loudeſt Strains,
While ſportive Ecchoes wake around,
And undulate a kindred Sound.

On ſome near Branch a Linnet ſtood,
A Warbler of the neighb'ring Wood,
Who ne'er debas'd his woodland Song
To mix with Flatt'ry's venal Throng;
No lawleſs Whim could bound his Flight,
He own'd no Rule, but that of Right.
Now reach'd his Ear the tuneful Sound,
That joy'd the woody Scenes around;
Raviſh'd he hears, then ſpeeds his Wing
To find this fav'rite Son of Spring;
Not long he ſoar'd in curious Flight,
Before the Goldfinch met his Sight;

First moves his Pity, then his Rage,
He ſees a Brother, ſees a Cage;
Silent ſome time he trod the Spray,
At length thus burſt his gen'rous Lay.

SAY Thou, whoſe melting Notes proclaim
At once thy Praiſes, and thy Shame,
While round thee broods the Captive's Woe,
Should the loud Hymns of Rapture flow?
Say, can'ſt thou drag the ſervile Chain,
And feel no Sting of mental Pain?
From thee the gen'rous Ardour's fled,
Each inborn Virtue hangs her Head;
Know this, that Freedom is Life's Breath,
Who lives a Slave, he lives a Death.

SEE! how unbounded I can rove,
From Hill to Plain, from Field to Grove;
For me the Flow'ret ſhoots in Bloom,
Varies its Hues, and breathes Perfume;

For me thro' Vales the Riv'lets ſtray,
And curl their Streams in wanton Play;
The Tree for me its Boughs diſplays,
A welcome Screen from mid-day Blaze;
And Freedom tunes my grateful Song,
She grants me all but Power of Wrong.

Honour and Love, my Hours employ,
That ſpurs to Danger, this to Joy,
As Juſtice leads, and Reaſon guides,
The diff'rent Call my Life divides:
But Tyrant's Lufts thy Joys controul,
Fetter thy Reaſon, damp thy Soul;
Unknown to thee Earth's Beauties paſs,
The gold'ning Corn, the Carpet Graſs;
Thy Song ne'er baniſh'd gloomy Night,
Nor thank'd the Sun for warming Light;
On thee thy Country calls in vain,
A Slave declines th' embattled Plain,
His Cloud of Woe is on him burſt,
Fate, do your Spight: he knows the worſt.

Oh!

Oh! rouze to Virtue, hear my Call,
Live free, or with thy Freedom fall;
Awake thy Soul, thy Shackles ſpurn,
To LIBERTY, or Duſt, return.

Too weak thy Plea the GOLDFINCH cries,
Falſe, as thy Joys in freer Skies;
No outward Forms of Life can grace
Its varied Scenes with real Peace,
The ſofteſt Tints of Bliſs, we find,
Are pencil'd by the eaſy Mind;
Then ceaſe to call me Child of Woe,
For Self-perſuaſion anſwers, No.

IN Trains I ſee around thy Head,
What daily Horror Dangers ſpread;
For thee the patient Fowlers ſet
The viſcous Branch, the meſhy Nett;
Thy Young each wand'ring Boy invades,
And mocks the Fence of thorny Shades,

Thy

Thy tender Joys he makes his Prize,
Nor heeds thy hov'ring Wings and Cries.
When Winter ſends her Storms around,
And Rains and Froſts deform the Ground,
How chill'd each Vein! how drips each Plume!
While Famine threats her ling'ring Doom:
But I defy the driving Snows;
Around me Spring eternal blows;
In vain the Storm attempts my Reſt,
Secure I ſleep in *Chloe*'s Breaſt,
Neſtling in Sweets I there can lie,
Where thouſands, thouſands wiſh to die.

Me ſhould the Voice of Freedom move,
Freedom, that boaſted Pow'r to rove?
Inconſtant Minds inclined to range,
On this Pretence indulge in Change,
Vary their Courſe, as Fancy ſtrays,
And whirl, like Chaff, in eddy Maze.

What

What ſhall I quit my eaſy Chain,
And forfeit *Chloe*'s Smiles for Pain?
Deluder, hence, I ſee your Snare,
And hate you Libertines of Air.

Too deep, alas! has Pleaſure's Bowl,
Reply'd the LINNET, drench'd thy Soul;
Thy Thoughts in languid Motions creep,
And give each Senſe to lazy Sleep,
While Virtue, Country, and Renown
Lie bury'd in luxurious Down.

SAY, haſt thou e'er revolv'd in Mind
The Ends, peculiar to thy Kind?
Why theſe thy Wings? Are theſe to lie
Unfurl'd, and Strangers to the Sky?
Should theſe endure the Pain of Wounds,
And feel the Dungeon's Iron Bounds?
Better hadſt thou have crawl'd thy Way,
A blind Inhabitant of Clay.

Why this thy Voice? To wake the Wood,
And ſpur thy Kind to Public Good:
Not tun'd to chaunt a Tyrant's Praiſe,
And ſooth his pamper'd Hours to Eaſe.
For Shame! Does Pain alarm thy Breaſt?
Pain gives to Life a pleaſing Zeſt;
For endleſs Scenes of conſtant Joy,
Fill the lull'd Soul, and filling, cloy.
And when fair LIBERTY's the Prize,
The Hero Pain, or Death deſies.

No fickle Paſſion Freedom gives,
Where Freedom reigns, there Reaſon lives,
She ſcorns wild Fancy's clam'rous Din,
And owns the living Law within;
Freedom and Conſcience are the ſame,
And are diſtinguiſh'd but by Name:
Why then——but now the Captive's Fair,
In haſte reſum'd her little Care.

The

The Slave reſpectful Homage paid,
And with his Chirrup hail'd the Maid;
The LINNET breath'd a pitt'ring Sigh,
Chid with a Look, then wing'd the Sky.

THUS, ſtudious of the Public Weal,
The Patriot burns with honeſt Zeal.
His honey'd Truths awake the Throng,
And ſweet Perſuaſion gilds his Tongue;
Who but approves the manly Cauſe?
Glory invites——but Danger awes.

O THOU, to whom the Muſe would pay
The Off'ring of a friendly Lay,
Receive that Praiſe thy Country owes,
That Praiſe, which from thy Virtue flows;
For, while employ'd in Freedom's Cauſe,
Succeſs may fail thee, not Applauſe.

WHEN

When ſculptur'd Braſs ſhall mix with Duſt,
And mould'ring falls the laurell'd Buſt,
When grateful Poets Toils ſhall fail,
Shrouded in dark Oblivion's Veil,
Borne on the Wings of Time thy Name
Unhurt ſhall ſoar, and gather Fame:
Thy Patriot Acts ſhall outlive Art,
They'll ſtand, engraven on the Heart.